

A paper read by D.M. Brower M.D. before the
Jackson County Medical Society December the 17th 1930

FORTY-TWO YEARS IN THE
PRACTICE OF MEDICINE
IN OREGON

In the spring of the year 1888, April the 5th, to be specific, the professors and preceptors of the Willamette University granted David Marcus Brower a diploma conferring upon him the degree of the Doctor of Medicine.

Their doing so may have been a mistake, it probably was, but it is some satisfaction in thinking that it was not the only one.

Taking a raw country boy from the hills and sticks of Marion county, Oregon, whose education was in the ungraded public school, but with added reading and study, was sufficient to get him an entrance into the class by having a recommendation from his preceptor, Dr. L. L. Rowland, a emeritus professor of the University under whom he had studied the best part of two years.

Taking such a one and in a few years with a very sparse and inefficient clinical material, that at that time was available in the hospitals of Portland and making him an M. D., was a grinding process that here's hoping will not be repeated very often.

The hospitals in Portland were, at that time, very unsanitary and inefficient and, because of such conditions, gave such poor service in clinical teaching, that attendance and observation disgusted him, although he knows that hospitals now are far better than in those days and has not even now gotten free from the prejudice gendered.

Hence his practice flows but little to hospitals, but is confined to office and family practice.

Some may say, and doubtless do, that such an education is mediocre, but by constant study in many fields of learning, coupled with a course of study in the American Extension University, wresting therefrom a degree of Bachelor of Law, he was enabled to pass a creditable examination before the Federal Board of Civil Service Examiners for service in the Indian Reservations in 1918, with a literary rating of 95%. This is mentioned not to boast, but to show what can be done under many handicaps, if one but wills to do.

Opening an office in Roseburg in the fall of 1888 with a recommendation from a former resident of that place, one of the professors of the Willamette University, and a very dear friend, James Brown, M.D. LL.D., things soon grew rosy. A successful coping with an epidemic of variola or small pox, that winter brought him into the lime light. Practice grew. Through the influence of Dr. A.D. Blevin, Chief Surgeon of the Southern Pacific Company, who had been his teacher in anatomy in the University, he was tendered and accepted the position of local surgeon for the S. P. Co. and ~~practice~~ was good and growing.

However, urged by a push and a pull he left it all, possibly because he could not stand prosperity, and ~~went~~ west to Myrtle Point, Coos county, 65 miles west from Roseburg.

Myrtle Point at that time was a real hot spot.

exiles. The memory of the four years of medical practice in and in the vicinity thereof, leaves a taste in the mouth, both bitter and sweet, bitter mostly. His thesis at the time of graduation was "Prophylaxis" - the recollection of his thesis was a mockery as far as application of its teaching was concerned. If such a thing as sanitation existed in the country in or adjacent to Myrtle Point, it was never in evidence. Speaking of whether worms cause disease or that disease causes worms, it should and doubtless was lost in the shuffle. There are some people that say that there are two kinds of dirt, clean and unclean. Well, if there are, there were both kinds in Coos County and there was not much choice.

Diphtheria - Ah, would God ~~that~~ that Diphtheria Anti-toxin as we now have it, had at that time been available. Many a defeat would have been turned into victory. Many a child now dead, ^{two of his first-born sons might be living.} might be living. Sweeter and more promising boys never lived than they. Forty years have passed, but the loss and agony is felt even now. Standing by the open grave of a first-born son, whom he has been helpless to succor, is a trial that can never be forgotten. The only comfort or consolation that can be offered is in Holy Writ that implies that it is just possible that they were taken from the Evil to come.

Added to diphtheria and typhoid fever, came the French named disease called LaGrippe, or more modern abbreviated Spanish nomenclature, "Flu" - a name that by its use, much of

Whole families went to the sick bed almost in one day. Added to the unpleasant joys of the practitioner came the awful flood of said winter. Beginning the 8th of January, rain fell almost continuously for six weeks. If words can describe conditions as they prevailed those six weeks, I am unable to find them. A mild description will inform the inquirer that the Coquille "river rose up and out of its banks until the hills on each side of the little valley became the banks, swift raging torrents tore down where the channel had been. Higher up near the head of the river, a whole mountain side slid into the stream, damming up the flow until a dam ~~was~~ formed that held back the water until the pressure became so great that the dam broke, and all started for the sea, down the South Fork, carrying a bridge of logs and debris miles in length. Thousands of big trees were ground into pulp. Other thousands came down whole. It was only by keeping out of the current into fields and lanes in several feet of back ~~or tide~~ water that water navigation could be made. Roads were impassable, being covered by many feet of water in the valley and obliterated by slides on the mountains. Ancient mountain ^{trail} ~~trails~~ that kept on the ridges and row boats on the water, were the only means of travel. Practice of medicine, under such conditions, was no picnic. When the trail reached the river, getting in a row boat, and swimming his horse by the side of the boat to the opposite bank or shore was no small risk. All this was done without complaint.

It was boots and saddles and no sparring. Only once was a call refused, and at the time of refusal the writer of this paper was in bed with a throat so sore that he could not talk except in a whisper.

The aftermath of the refusal was that the party calling on the Doctor, got angry and called another local physician for his family who almost emptied a drug store of its ancient medicine doctering the family and quit or was fired. The still angry husband and father went to Coquille, 9 miles away for medical assistance. The doctor agreed to come with the understanding the writer of this paper be called into consultation on the case. The consultation was held. A consolidated lower right lung was found. A diagnosis was agreed upon, but when it came to the prognosis the doctor from Coquille said the patient would die. The local doctor maintained she would get well. Without any sign of ill feeling, the doctor from Coquille said "She is your patient." "Do for her as you will." She got well. At least she got up and lived several years with a limping lung, and she and her husband were good friends of the local doctor ever afterwards.

One of the saddest and most distressing events of that awful winter occurred in a family that lived one and one half miles up the river from Myrtle Point. The mother of the family had lost her first husband, named Wagner, by whom she had six children. She had a little son 2 years old by her

second husband named Pugh. Her oldest daughter was married to one of the descendants of Dr. Hermann, pioneer physician of the county, likely the first doctor in the valley. Her second son, Trice, aged 13, took gripal pneumonitis, soon two more of the children took the disease. By the time Trice began to convalesce, the worn-out mother took sick, being in the third month of pregnancy - the end could be seen from the beginning. In a few days she miscarried and died the following night. The house was an open one and rain dashed in the windows and under the doors. The river rose until one could almost step from the boat to the door step. The dead woman was carried to the side of the sick children for a last look at their only parent. One could hardly live long enough to forget a scene like that. At least I will not live long enough.

Fluid Extract of Jaborandi was one of the most commonly used medicines in those days for Pneumonitis. By the way it was quite efficient as it kept the skin in a constant perspiration and, with the temperature of between 65 and 70 in the sick room with anywhere near efficient and cheerful nursing, patients nearly, if not always, got well. Dover powders also were useful. They acted as a sudorific and allayed a troublesome cough. If there were plural complications, the proper application of adhesive plasters relieved the pain and aided much to recovery without complications or being followed by a bad sequel.

Typhoid Fever, or more properly, Enteritis, ravaged the little valley every fall and winter. Boiling the drinking

water kept the disease away from our family, and friends of the family who were wise enough to heed our advice, and follow our example. Fortunately, my professor of the Practice of Medicine, Dr. Watkins knew his piece and his teachings on Enteritis were exhaustive and vital. He had a ready and anxious learner. If I learned anything well in my College course it was how to treat Enteritis. The result was that out of more than a hundred ^{cases} ~~under~~ my care but one died. Keeping down high temperature by the cautious use of Coal Tar derivatives and quinine and by the use of anemas at a temperature slightly below normal temperature, was a pretty safe course of procedure. Turpentine stupes on the abdomen aided in keeping down the inflammation centered in the pyers patches. At least we thought it did.

What sanitation and the scientific and ^{wide} ~~wire~~ use of the knowledge in preventitive medicine has done for Typhoid fever, Diptheria and kindred diseases, makes one glad he has lived in the last four decades as an active physician in the art of healing. Glad he has lived in an age of scientific research and accomplishment in medical lines ^{been} ~~that~~ have never equalled in all the ages or decades of the past. To the young men and women just entering upon the field of practice, we hand the torch lighted and held high by your predecessors, ^{not forgetting to} ~~giving~~ justly earned praise to the forces that have contributed to cleaner homes, cleaner and better foods, better clothing, more efficient sanitary conditions than prevailed in Western Oregon forty years ago.

It is to those who come after that we hand the heritage of better things. Speaking of food - many a time in days past in the long ago a trip to the grocery store for those in beggarly want, was more indicated than one to the druggist. Often then and since the psychology that followed a little help, accompanied by a cheery voice, a smile accompanied by a story told to cheer the patient ^{give} and ^{to} her or his associates something to remember, and sometimes refer to at his next visit. More especially was this true in homes that were under quarantine when quarantine meant cutting off all communication with outside people, except the attending physician. No daily newspapers - no phone - no radio - nothing but long dreary days of loneliness with want in the offing.

Under the circumstances and considering that the only change in the scenery was the coming of the Attending physician, who would come in dressed in a rubber suit and high-topped rubber boots, but nevertheless though he should be dry, he might be, and often was soaked to the skin, because of some mistep while wading a swift current through a currass or break in the rivers bank, and stepping into some hole left by a washed-out stump. The wading being due to the swiftness of the current in midstream, which was so swift that no row boat could be pulled against it. Coming in in such a condition, but nevertheless, bringing in and leaving the needed cheer, may have required some effort but it was done and the effort and its effect was worthwhile and for a wonder the patients ^{and did} would get well.

Looking back over these years one wonders that many got well, but they did, for a wonder they did. Outside of Diphtheria in young children, wherein the membrane invaded the larynx, indicated by the voice dropping to a whisper, but few died of acute diseases.

However, consumption or rather tuberculosis in that damp, sunless climate and poorly ventilated dark rooms, with utter absence of sanitation, claimed many. Symptomatic treatment of such cases was the limit and always ended in a funeral.

Plural Glandular treatment, now ~~so~~ effective, was unknown. Physiology of the ductless glands was unheard of. Koch had isolated the tubercular ^{bacilli} ~~bacilli~~ but the knowledge of how to successfully combat the disease was lacking. The intelligent treatment and prevention that has arisen since is one of the marvels of the past two or three decades. The discovery of the role of the ductless or endocrine glands and how, by keeping them functioning normally, gave a promise of preventing ^{of} and aiding nature to cure tuberculosis, and the ~~other~~ ^{that} scourge of modern time so prevalent, namely Cancer, ~~but~~ in the days of which we are describing, ^{were} ~~were~~ unknown; the ablest physicians when facing tuberculosis or cancer, bowed their heads and admitted defeat and departed leaving no hope. Tuberculosis at that time was the Great White Plague.

The bitter experiences of the 4 years of medical practice in the early ninties of the last century in Coos County, were frequently sweetened by some humorous event. One was wherein when ^{He} I was worn and tired from continued horseback riding.

and while attending a patient 8 miles from Myrtle Point, he inquired regarding the patient's mother, who had been nursing her, and was told that her mother was at home two miles farther up the creek, and was sick and wanted to see ~~him~~. He had never been there, but his former oarsman and friend being there, offered to pilot him. As the foot path was said to be shorter the guide offered to walk with him. Tired of riding, a walk of two miles and return looked like a change. Well, the trip was made. Upon opening the door the old lady was sitting by the fireplace, nursing a sick tooth and was broken out with chicken-pox. The only recognition she gave us was to call out "Did you bring your Drawers?" the native's name for forceps. I usually carried a Universal Forceps but that time I did not have them. On saying I did not have them, I got the uncivil reply "I don't want you" - Swallowing my chagrin, I inquired if there might not be some kind of pinchers and was told that there was one there and was shown a short jawed pair of pinchers that the head of the family used to pull shoe pegs and tacks in cobbling shoes. The tooth stood alone - the only one in the lower jaw - it was solid but aching - "I believe I can pull it" I informed her. - Placing the pinchers on the offending tooth I pulled. The pinchers slipped - the woman yelled - I won't repeat what she said - but I encouraged her to let me try again, assuring her I could get it. Well, I knew it would be my only chance and the tooth came out after a hard pull. Throwing down the improvised forceps I walked back to my house. The

Another incident ^{one} that occurred in my ^{first} ~~last~~ year in Myrtle Point which was almost a tragedy, was as follows: Returning late one afternoon from down river in a row boat, a call was waiting me ^{and} on landing the messenger said a man was badly hurt on the Middle Fork. The messenger had come over a trail over Sugar Loaf Mountain, one of the highest in that part of the country. He came by trail as the road around the mountain was closed by innumerable slides. Taking my large operating case and all I thought I needed, we hit the trail. Getting at the bedside of the patient I found a man with 3 badly borken ribs - Was he hurting? Well, he was - I had everything that I needed, but what I did not have was an adhesive plaster - I was 8 miles from my base of supplies. It was dark - the snow was falling on the mountains. No one could get to Myrtle Point. I was stuck - I was desperate. We tried getting pine pitch to make a substitute - Plaster failed - clutching at a straw hope, I said "Is there any black wax in this neighborhood?" The reply was "Yes, there are 3 balls of Black wax upstairs." It was gotten pronto. Three strips of drilling were cut proper length and width. Quickly the wax was melted and spread. When cool enough, the improvised plasters were applied. Their application worked like magic - the patient getting immediate relief - three weeks later the patient rode horse-back into town, the plasters were removed, the ribs as sound as on the other side. Question "Would any one but a country raised ^{raised} boy have thought of Black wax?"

Almost the last case I had in Coos County was a young man Jack Mayes - a newly married man living on the North Fork 16 miles from Myrtle Point. He had a typical case of pneumonia. A very sick man - by going up on every second evening, staying all night and waiting until the second evening, I saw him once each day. His brother-in-law living 2 miles nearer to Myrtle Point was sick with enteritis, which he contracted after Jack took sick. On my fourth visit, about the end of one week, I was there about nine o'clock ^{p.m.}. The patient's temperature was high. I put him on Fluid Extract Jaborandi, 15 ^{drops} ~~drops~~ every 1, 2, 3, 4 hours. At 3 I was called out of bed. Jack was hot, his skin dry, but saliva was ^{running} ~~penning~~, temperature 105, I had left ¹² ~~2~~ doses of 10 gr. Anti-Kamnia powders at the brother-in-laws, 2 miles away. I told an attendant to go and get 2 of the powders and on his return to give him one. He got them and gave the patient one as directed. I got up about 7 and on stepping to the door of the sick room, Jack met me with a merry voice - "I am all right, doctor" - he was sweating profusely, the fever was broken - his temperature was going down rapidly. The crisis was past - my services were no longer needed, but Jack swears by me to this day as a doctor that suits him.

Some one may say "Did you not make mistakes"? Yes, plenty, some serious ones, some not so serious. Unfortunately for me, I always had to or did admit it - a thing that a doctor ought not to do. Somehow I could not shift the responsibility to someone else - the nurse for instance. Successful

however by not telling them I have happily forgot the most of them.

I can recall losing 3 cases of surgery. One I think suicided, in the absence of his attendant. One I suspicioned was poisoned by his attendant. His wound could have hardly caused his death, but it is just possible that a Thrombus may have caused it. Opportunity for clearing up suspicion cases were megar in those days in that County.

One or two cases of Miscarriage went fluy on ^{my} hands that knowing what I now know and possessing the instruments I now posses would have terminated differently but sush ^{was} ~~was~~ the bug ^{bears} ~~bears~~ of medical practice in days of 40 years ago. Nearly 40 years have passed since I left the Coguille. Some pleasant memoreies drift back to us . Some that I treated in their childhood but who are now white haired, much whiter than mine. On meeting them last summer recalling those days they smilingly remarked that they did not know how much good the medicine I gave them did for them but they were sure that the smiling face that I brought into their sick room and the laugh I left with them upon my departure helped them a lot.

COM ing to Ashland in the fall of 1893 I opened an office in the Opera Building where the Nininger corner now stands. From a financial point of view my moving to Ashland was a mistake I can and have made money in other places, not so in Ashland. The diseases that were prevalent or common in Coos Co.

those that lived through the panic of 1892 to 96 who can realize the awfulness of the financial depression of those days. It was different from the rich man's panics of 1907 and 1930, there was no money in the United States treasury or if there was it was borrowed. Banks failed, mortgages by the thousands were foreclosed, Coxies Army was some army that had to be fed.

Of the several Doctors practising in Ashland at the time of our coming Dr. Songer is the only one left with us and he has been on the retired list for several years. Dr. Parson died four or five years ago. His memory is still sweet to those of us who were associated with him. He was a fine physician and a true gentleman.

Many Medicos have come most of them have gone away. Of those who came and stayed or are remaining are Drs. Mattie B. and H.M. Shaw, Drs. Swedenburg, ^{MacCracken} Gregg and Wood are still with us. Drs Haines, and Barkwell being later arrivals.

Upon leaving Coos Co. I resigned the office of Coroner. The year following my migration to Jackson Co. I was elected Coroner of this county, serving two years, I enjoyed the work of the office very much. As far as I know no one at whose inquest I officiated ever complained that my service was unsatisfactory; however owing to a party split I was not reelected.

Ashland at the time of my coming was a very unsanitary town. Diseases that were gendered and spread by filth and poverty were common. The following winter there was an epidemic of Scarlet Fever spread over the town. After it got well scattered the Town Council appointed me as Chairman of the health Board, The stopping of the epidemic was some job; nevertheless by establishing an efficient quarantine and a campaign for sanitation there were no more new foci and the epidemic was stayed.

When the danger was on the officers were very smooth and friendly, but when the danger was past and I presented my bill of \$10.00 which ought to have been more than twice as much, my popularity waned promptly. People on whom I had to use almost drastic measures to get them to remove manure piles and pools that germinated and harbored disease germs were wrathful. The Council demurred at the bill; I explained; it did a lot of good, the Council following the advice of the City attorney, whom they paid \$50.00 per month allowed me \$5.00 and fired me off the Board---Lesson: If you hold an office in which the public should be served, do nothing if you want to hold on and get the public approval.

The earlier years of practice in Ashland and surrounding country were hard and rewards meager. The roads were muddy and sometimes the Main Streets were almost impassable.

In the beginning of the 20th Century sewerage began. As it progressed Enteritis and Diphtheria began disappearing; it has been several years since I have seen either of them. Diphtheria Antitoxin and Typhoid Serum coupled with Sanitation has worked wonders not only as preventatives but as aids to recovery; I am enthusiastic for all of them.

The lessening of poverty among the pitifully poor due to the great increase in wealth following the great advance or progress of the invention of wealth producing machinery added to intelligent methods of treatment. Tuberculosis has been successfully combated and we are winning out in the fight against cancer. The winning card against both was and is the discovery of the functioning of the ductless glands; this discovery, which we can safely say is the greatest Physiological discovery since Harvey discovered the Circulation of the blood 350 years ago. It has or will revolutionize

the teachings of Physiology and Therapy. Instead of a pathological therapy a Physiological one will be used in the treating of abnormal conditions. In our effort to combat Tuberculosis, Cancer and kindred diseases due to lowered or sluggish activity of the Endocrine system we are far better armed than we were before we knew nothing of them except as an Anatomical fact. ^{by} The lowered body resistance of which ^{which can be raised by} I have frequently called Hypo-thyroidism, the use of Glandular and plural glandular medication has proven very effective.

Much of the good coming from the use of Harrowers medication may be and probably does arise from the vehicle he uses in the administering nearly all of them which he calls the "Calcium Phosphoric Compound" which he says contains 11 of the 12 tissue salts of the body minus Nat, Mur or sodium Chloride. Two parts of the latter out of 100 being added make a complete number or dozen, being the twelve salts of the blood ^{there} meeting the Bio-chemists teaching with a shotgun medication that may prove worth while. By adding this compound to equal parts of Sodium Salicylate and giving the compound in 30 grain doses gets the system in an alkaline condition ^{said medicine} that given in a cup of hot water puts the body in an Alkaline condition conducive to health. Believe it or not, ^{As} all chronic cases are de-hydrated be sure that all medication ~~is~~ given in or with plenty of water, preferably hot, if after meals especially. You may call the above my contribution to medical science as a result of 42 years of Practice and study.

By the use of plenty of good food, light, artificial or otherwise, fresh air and rest with $\frac{1}{2}$ grain doses of Thyroid Extract and suprarenal gland extract, added to 15 grains of Calcined Phosphate Comp, Tuberculosis can be successfully treated and recovery made

conferrees in their treatment of Cancer through hypodermic administration of the cortex of the Suprarenal gland and its possible combination of other endocrine glands, the solution quite possible being highly alkaline.

As poverty is a predisposing cause of disease, the Solution of the Labor problem which is "How are the products of Labor to be equitably distributed which will remove poverty, many of the diseases now prevalent will disappear, but this is something else; i.e. anticipation.

During the 42 years that are past Christian Science and Hospitalization have appeared upon the scene to harrass the practitioner. We wonder which is the greatest menace. The pure food and drug act cut into the Patent medicine trade; The Harrison Anti Narcotic Act, Prohibition and its associate the Volstead Act has cut into the joys of the Medical Practitioner causing some of us to complain bitterly and to shout loud and long for the good old days of whiskey and castor oil.

The use of electricity, its light and heat, used for healing, has all arisen in the past four decades. The use of the vacuume cleaner has lessened calls for our services, like it or not. At the first meeting of the Southern Oregon Medical Society after my moving to Ashland, I became a member thereof. This was in May 1894. Attendance at annual gatherings dwindled until at the session of 1902, Dr. Robinson of Jacksonville, being President, at the meeting at Ashland there was no attendance except the Presidents from outside points. At said meeting I was elected President of the Society and Dr. Marion Shaw, Secretary-Treasurer. The following winter the Society held a winter session, the only one, I believe that it has ever held. The holding thereof seemed to put new life into the Society. Dr. Woods

of the Society for life. At this meeting I read a paper on the subject, The Sympathetic Nervous System. Whether deserving it or not, Dr. Hutchison eulogized it very highly.

In the spring of 1930 at the May meeting of the Society, I was elected President for the second time. The winter session spoken of was made possible and was helped much by the Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Shaw. Like all good secretaries, the office can and often does glorify the organization. I can and do say this the more freely with the realization of the great good done our own Society through the magnanimous, but helpful service of our faithful Secretary Dr. Ed Shockley.

Dr. Marion Shaw left Ashland in 1903, returning to Hood River, dying about ten years later. I can freely say he was a good physician, a fine manly man and he made a good secretary, and gave the Southern Oregon Medical Society a fine boost.

In the early existence of the Jackson County Medical Society I became a member thereof and have enjoyed the privileges and benefits of said Society very, very much, being honored by having the office of Vice President and later made Honorary member for life. I enjoy my friends, and their friendliness more than they may guess. Whether I live long or die soon, if I can truly be called "A Friend of Man" and have the approval of one who called himself the "Son of Man," I shall be satisfied.

I thank you.